IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-9 (canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) A refrigeration device, comprising:

a thermally insulating housing;

said thermally insulating housing enclosing an inner chamber and an evaporator arranged in said housing separated from said inner chamber;

said evaporator including a surface where an ice layer forms during operation;

a pair of temperature sensors placed in the vicinity of said evaporator such that for a given thickness of said ice layer only one of said temperature sensors is embedded in said ice layer;

a heating device for heating said evaporator;

a monitoring circuit connected to said pair of temperature sensors; and

said monitoring circuit determines the difference (ΔT) between the temperature values detected by said pair of temperature sensors and activates said heating device when said temperature difference exceeds a predetermined value (ΔT_{max}).

11. (Currently Amended) The refrigeration device according to claim 10, ~~including~~ wherein a first one of said temperature sensors is arranged directly on said surface of said evaporator and ~~said~~a second one of said temperature sensors is arranged at a distance from said surface.

12. (Currently Amended) The refrigeration device according to claim 11, including a channel communicating with said inner chamber, ~~and~~wherein said evaporator is arranged in said channel ~~communicating with said inner chamber~~.

13. (Currently Amended) The refrigeration device according to claim 12, ~~including~~wherein said second one of said temperature sensors is arranged on an output of said channel terminating in said inner chamber.

14. (Currently Amended) The refrigeration device according to claim 11, ~~including~~wherein said evaporator is arranged in said housing separated from said inner chamber by an insulating partition having at least one channel communicating with said inner chamber through said partition, and wherein said evaporator ~~communicating~~communicates with said inner chamber through said channel.

15. (Currently Amended) The refrigeration device according to claim 14, ~~including~~wherein said second one of said temperature sensors is arranged on an output of said channel terminating in said inner chamber.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A refrigeration device ~~according to claim 10, including~~ comprising:

a thermally insulating housing;

said thermally insulating housing enclosing an inner chamber and an evaporator arranged in said housing separated from said inner chamber;

said evaporator including a surface where an ice layer forms during operation;

a pair of temperature sensors placed in the vicinity of said evaporator such that for a given thickness of said ice layer only one of said temperature sensors is embedded in said ice layer;

a carrier attached to said evaporator surface, ~~and~~wherein a first one of said temperature sensors is arranged directly on said carrier adjacent said surface of said evaporator and said second one of said temperature sensors is arranged on said carrier at a distance from said first one of said temperature sensors and said surface;

a heating device for heating said evaporator;

a monitoring circuit connected to said pair of temperature sensors; and

said monitoring circuit determines the difference (ΔT) between the temperature values detected by said pair of temperature sensors and activates said heating device when said temperature difference exceeds a predetermined value (ΔT_{max}).

17. (Currently Amended) An operating method for a refrigeration device, including a thermally insulating housing;

said thermally insulating housing enclosing an inner chamber and an evaporator arranged in said housing separated from said inner chamber;

said evaporator including a surface where an ice layer forms during operation;

a pair of temperature sensors ~~placed in the vicinity of said evaporator~~positioned such that for a given thickness of said ice layer only one of said temperature sensors is embedded in said ice layer;

a heating device for heating said evaporator;

a monitoring circuit connected to said pair of temperature sensors;

said monitoring circuit determining the difference (ΔT) between the temperature values detected by said pair of temperature sensors;

the method including the steps of:

a) positioning the pair of temperature sensors in the vicinity of said evaporator;

b) detecting a difference (ΔT) between temperature values detected by said pair of temperature sensors; and

~~b~~c) deciding that a defrosting procedure is necessary, if the difference (ΔT) exceeds a limit value (ΔTmax).

18. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 17, ~~including~~wherein said steps ~~a) and~~ b) and c) are in each case performed after a preset delay after said evaporator is started up.

19. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 18, ~~including~~wherein said steps ~~a) and~~ b) and c) are performed if the ~~change in~~ speed of change of the temperature on at least one of both sensors has fallen below a predetermined limit value.

20. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 17, ~~including~~wherein said evaporator is heated when it has been decided that a defrosting procedure is necessary.

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, including said monitoring circuit detecting said temperature difference and deciding that said defrosting procedure is necessary.

22. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, including said monitoring circuit ~~activates~~activating said heating device when said temperature difference exceeds a predetermined value (ΔTmax).

23. (New) The refrigeration device according to claim 11, wherein said second one of said temperature sensors is disposed adjacent a ventilator positioned between said evaporator and said inner chamber.

24. (New) The refrigeration device according to claim 10, wherein neither of said temperature sensors is disposed in said inner chamber.

25. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein step a) is practiced by positioning a first one of said temperature sensors directly on said surface of said evaporator and positioning a second one of said temperature sensors adjacent a ventilator positioned between said evaporator and said inner chamber.